

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today the House of Representatives passed legislation (H.R. 1231) that would require the Department of the Interior (DOI) to open new areas for lease sales on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), including southern California's coastline, without determining which areas are actually safe for exploration and development. Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and Ranking Member of the Social Security Subcommittee, voted against the measure and released the following statement:

**“These are tough times for working families and paying more than four dollars for a gallon of gas is not making it any easier. ☐ Record high energy prices are hurting the family checkbook, preventing small businesses from expanding, and holding back our economy from fully recovering. ☐ While it’s tempting to think we can drill our way out of this, the numbers just don’t add up.☐**

**Today, the United States has two percent of the world’s oil reserves but we consume twenty-five percent of all the oil. ☐ Our nation is producing 1.5 million more barrels of oil per day than it did in 2005, and oil production is at its highest level since 2003, but a tank of gas is not any cheaper.**

**This ‘drill-only’ plan by Congressional Republicans will not bring down gas prices today but it will leave southern California’s coastline vulnerable to oil spills tomorrow. ☐ We need a smart energy plan that reduces our dependence on oil, develops our use of clean energy sources and creates millions of good-paying American jobs.”**